

# CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY

## Council of the Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science

### Minutes of Meeting 00-02

held

Friday, March 24, 2000 at 2:00 p.m. in H 769

Present: Dr. N. Esmail (Chair), Dr. M.O. Ahmad, Dr. A.K. Athienitis, Dr. R. Bhat, Dr. B.C. Desai, Dr. T. Fancott, Dr. R. Ganesan, Dr. W. Ghaly, Dr. J.C. Giguère, Dr. G.J. Gouw, Dr. G. Grahne, Dr. F. Haghighat, Ms. L. Harris, Dr. J.F. Hayes, Dr. V.S. Hoa, Dr. J. Jans, Dr. K. Khorasani, Mr. J. Kopanas, Dr. C. Lam, Dr. H.F. Li, Dr. O. Moselhi, Dr. J. Opatrny, Ms. C. Paradisis, Mr. C. Piché, Mr. P. Regimbald, Ms. A. St-Hilaire, Mr. Y. Wang, Dr. R. Zmeureanu, Ms. S. de Souza (Recording Secretary).

Observer: Ms. E. Xenos

Regrets: Dr. E.I. Plotkin, Prof. L. Quesnel, Dr. A. Ramamurthy, Prof. M. Silas

Guest: Dr. A. Hanna

#### 1. Adoption of the Agenda

The ECA Forum 2000 event was added under 'Other Business'.

Motion That the agenda be adopted as amended (O. Moselhi, G.J. Gouw)

00-02-01

Vote: Carried unanimously

#### 2. Adoption of Minutes

Motion That the Minutes of Meeting 00-01 (February 18, 2000) be adopted

00-02-02 (J.F. Hayes, F. Haghighat)

Vote: Carried unanimously

#### 3. Chair's Remarks

##### *Building Plans*

The Chair informed the Council that members of the Faculty had been asked to provide their space needs in the new building. He further reported that the plans for the new building were moving ahead. A successful meeting was held with CIM. At the present time, there appears to be a mood of general satisfaction. A response from the City of Montreal regarding the York Cinema building is imminent. However, it is uncertain if the City will approve the demolition of this building. Nonetheless, if approval is not

granted, construction will be carried out but on the side of Guy St., adjoining the GM building.

### ***Changes***

Sweeping changes are taking place in the University. These involve:

(i) Teaching Technology: The Faculty is officially involved in the McConnell Project which is a first step in the direction of teaching innovation. Classroom instruction may require the use of a laptop for PowerPoint presentations. Or, a large portion of classroom teaching could bring into play the internet. The changes in teaching technology are spreading fast and the students are aware of the benefits of applying this technology to the classroom. All possible assistance will be provided in this direction. A teaching technologist will be hired in the Dean's office, and in a few years, each department in the Faculty may have its own teaching technologist, too.

(ii) Support for academic work: Faculty members are spending a lot of time on chores that do not require their academic expertise. As a result their academic work, namely teaching and research, gets bogged down. To address this issue, some fundamental change is required. Faculty members are needed in the peer review system. Otherwise they should be freed to do their teaching and research. Certain professionals (not professors or clerical staff) can assist in orienting the professors' work towards academic/intellectual goals.

The Chair invited responses relative to teaching technology and support for academic work.

### ***New Budget of the Government of Quebec***

Members were reminded that clientèle additionnelle had been so far an incremental incentive for universities. But this year, the Government is considering a change in its granting formula to universities, with no guarantee that a university will receive the same grant as in the past. The Government will consider only the total FTE count. The new budget has created two accounting formulae - the old formula and the new formula which is based on FTEs. Additional money will be granted on the basis of performance indicators. In Ontario, the total increase for universities is 2%. These additional monies dispersed are based on certain key performance indicators which ranks its 17 universities by measuring (i) the percentage of each first class that graduates; (ii) the percentage of graduates employed six months following graduation; (iii) the percentage of graduates employed after two years. Institutions that rank in the top tier will receive twice as much funding as those that fall in the middle tier; whereas those at the bottom will receive no additional funding. The Government of Quebec is keen on performance indicators like Alberta and Ontario. However, it is hazy about how the money will be granted. What is certain is that the base budget is FTEs, and performance indicators are graduates finding jobs/quality of education. Research will be measured by FTEs, that is, primarily graduate students.

4.

### **Election Procedures (ECFC Doc. 93-4-1)**

Revisions to the election procedures are being proposed in an effort to simplify and speed-up the electoral process. Two recommendations were on the table: the first was presented by Dr. Hanna, Chair, Faculty Election Committee and the other was Proposal II of the Proposed Amendments to the Faculty Election Procedures, approved by the

Executive Committee. Members were in favour of the latter. However, an amendment that Item no. 3.10 (Page 2 of the document) not be replaced, was suggested.

Motion  
00-02-03 That the election procedures in the Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science be revised according to the amended document (Proposed Amendments to the Faculty Election Procedures, Proposal II) (O. Moselhi, T. Fancott)

Vote: Carried unanimously

**5. Graduate Curriculum Changes (ECFC Doc. 00-02-1)**

Dr. Bhat presented the graduate curriculum change for the Department of Mechanical Engineering. The proposal called for a change in the title and description of MECH 654- Welding and Nondestructive Testing to include joining processes as well as welding.

Motion  
00-02-04 That MECH 654 course title be changed to 'Joining Processes and Nondestructive Testing' (R. Bhat, V.S. Hoa)

Vote: Carried unanimously

Next, Dr. Bhat noted that attempts have been underway to streamline the graduate programs. The ECGSC set up a Committee to make a study and recommend changes in this respect. Common Guidelines to the Ph.D. program developed by this Committee were approved last year. Then followed discussions on the Master's programs. Ways to reduce the time for completion of the M.Eng. programs were studied. Variations in the degree requirements in Canadian/North American universities were pointed out. The definition of a credit, as recognized by the Quebec Education Ministry, was explained and its value examined.

Motion  
00-02-05 Whereas credit values assigned to courses in the Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science should reflect the workloads required of students taking these courses,

Whereas a credit defined by the Quebec Education Ministry as 45 hours of study activity, including class contact time,

Whereas credit values assigned to the Faculty's graduate courses often do not reflect the current average workloads expected of students taking these courses,

Whereas as a result, current overall workload requirements for certain of the Faculty's graduate programs exceeds those of other Canadian and North American Universities,

The Council of the Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science invites its departments to examine their graduate programs from the point of view of the number of courses, the credit values of these courses, and the total student workload requirements in their graduate programs, and to propose modifications which will make the programs consistent with similar programs in other Canadian and North American Universities, while conforming to Quebec norms. (R. Bhat, T. Fancott)

Vote: Carried (1 abstention)

6. **Research-oriented Graduate Courses**

This has reference to the minimum enrollment required to offer a graduate course. It was pointed out that formerly the minimum requirement was 5. But this was increased to 10, resulting in course cancellations. Further, in other Quebec universities, the minimum requirement is 5. It was explained that in difficult courses which support very specialized research programs, there is a temptation to broaden a course to make it easier. Although this may result in an increase in enrollment, it undermines the research program in the long run. It is therefore suggested to relax the minimum enrollment requirement in 600/700 level courses that support research programs.

Dr. Khorasani explained that a comprehensive document, approved in principle by the Executive Committee, has been prepared. Its purpose is to address in a comprehensive way teaching workload for large classes as well as low enrollment classes. In terms of large classes, several ideas are being considered. Faculty members may receive extra credit for teaching very large classes. On the other hand, for teaching reading courses, faculty members currently receive no credit. One idea under consideration is that if a course is cancelled due to low enrollment, it can be converted into a reading course, and when offered over two years, it may be considered as equivalent to a course, provided that a faculty member has given eight-student equivalent instruction. Furthermore, the minimum enrollment limits are 8 for a 600 level course and 6 for a 700 level course.

The members were assured that every attempt is being made to facilitate the workload of faculty members. Changes, which could be implemented for as early as next year, are on the way.

7. **Recommendations from ECUSC (ECFC Doc. 00-02-2)**

Dr. Fancott presented the changes recommended by ECUSC for the Academic Calendar of 2001-2002. The changes involve program changes, course changes and regulation changes.

The program changes may be summarized as follows:

- Delete List A (Social Aspects of Engineering group) under Complementary Studies
  - Move ENGR 492 - Historical Impact of Technology on Society from List A (to fulfil CEAB requirements) to the Engineering Core list.
  - Rename List B of Complementary Studies Electives as 'General Education Electives'
- Also, it was recommended that ENCS 410-Social Issues in Computers and Information Technology replace ENGR 492 in the Electrical and Computer Engineering programs.

Motion  
00-02-06

That the above program changes be approved (T. Fancott, J.C. Giguère)

Vote: Carried unanimously

The course changes entail modifying and updating the contents of two EMAT courses: EMAT 213 - Ordinary Differential Equations and EMAT 233 - Advanced Calculus will replace EMAT 212 - Calculus and Differential Equations and EMAT 232 - Matrices and Advanced Calculus. However, the two latter courses will be retained for one year.

Motion  
00-02-07

That EMAT 213-Ordinary Differential Equations and EMAT 233-Advanced Calculus replace EMAT 212-Calculus and Differential Equations and EMAT 232-Matrices and

Advanced Calculus (T. Fancott, J.C. Giguère)

Vote: Carried unanimously

Also, the Civil Engineering program is proposing to delete CIVI 489 - Computational Hydraulics and replace it by a more updated course, namely CIVI 484 - Hydraulics Engineering. CIVI 484 will be an elective course.

Motion 00-02-08 That CIVI 484-Hydraulics Engineering replace CIVI 489-Computational Hydraulics (T. Fancott, O. Moselhi)

Vote: Carried unanimously

Two regulation changes were proposed (i) to eliminate supplemental exams, and (ii) to change the wording of the scheduling of deferred exams.

Deferred exams are scheduled during mid-February and mid-August. However, this has been causing problems every semester. Thus, it is being proposed to schedule them during the regular exam periods and normally, when the course is offered. For deferred exams involving prerequisite courses, students will be allowed to take the follow-up course at their own risk.

Motion 00-02-09 That the scheduling of deferred exams be aligned with the next regular offering of the course as per Page 6 of 8, Section No. 16.3.9 of ECFC Doc. 00-02-2 (T. Fancott, G. Gouw)

Vote: Carried unanimously

The rationale for eliminating supplemental exams is because of the high failure rates. It was pointed out that students are more successful when the course is repeated as opposed to when the supplemental is written. However, students whose performance may be affected due to non-academic reasons such as illness, may be granted the right to a supplemental exam by student request.

Motion 00-02-10 That the Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science eliminate supplemental exams (T. Fancott, C. Piché)

Vote: Carried (9 in favour; 3 opposed)

## 8. Other Business

Members of the Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science were invited to the ECA Formal 2000 event scheduled for April 6, 2000 at the Molson Breweries. Information about the event was distributed.

## 9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:55 p.m.